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Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

Summary report of the 2018 parliamentary hearing

Note by the President of the General Assembly

The present document contains the summary report of the 2018 parliamentary hearing, held in New York on 22 and 23 February 2018, which is circulated pursuant to General Assembly resolution 65/123.

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Towards a global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration: a parliamentary perspective

Summary report on the 2018 parliamentary hearing, jointly organized by the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the Office of the President of the General Assembly at United Nations Headquarters, 22 and 23 February 2018

Opening session

> "We do not have a choice to accept or reject migration, because it's there. The only choice we have is what to do about it"
>
> Miroslav Lajčák
> President of the General Assembly
> at its seventy-second session

1. The 2018 parliamentary hearing served as an opportunity for parliamentarians to discuss migration and contribute to the emerging global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration. At the time of the hearing, Member States were beginning negotiation of the agreement with a view to adopting it in early December 2018 at a conference in Morocco.

2. The President of the General Assembly at its seventy-second session, Miroslav Lajčák, addressed the gathering, stressing that migration was a global phenomenon that required global action. He said that parliamentarians played a crucial role in bringing the perspectives of the people they represented to the United Nations and ensuring that the global compact for migration would be pragmatic and effective. The President encouraged parliamentarians to use data and facts to combat misconceptions and drive evidence-based approaches. He said that the shared commitment of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the United Nations to multilateralism was greatly needed when addressing migration.

3. The President of IPU, Gabriela Cuevas Barron, painted a picture of international migration as a common element of human history: 258 million people live outside of their country of birth, an estimated 50 million do not have regular status and up to 10 million work abroad every year. Many migrants follow dangerous and sometimes deadly routes in search of safety and opportunity. Those who reach their destination often face stigmatization and violations of their human rights. She emphasized parliamentarians' responsibility to bolster change in their countries and promote legislation that treats migrants with dignity and respect, regardless of their migration status or reason for leaving.

I. A global approach to migration

> "Migration is a global reality, and managing migration is not only our collective responsibility, but one of today's most significant tests of international cooperation"
>
> Louise Arbour
> Special Representative of the
> Secretary-General
> for International Migration

4. It was noted that while migration had acquired greater importance on the United Nations agenda in recent years, most progress had taken place at the regional level, not the global level. The Sustainable Development Goals, while sidestepping migration as a primary goal, included specific targets on migration that acknowledged the positive role of migration for sustainable development and economic growth. Meanwhile, many countries had been affected by massive outflows of people escaping conflict and natural disasters. The number of people forced to migrate was likely to increase owing to climate change and the resulting environmental conditions and natural disasters.

5. It was stated that while there existed a specific definition, framework and resources within the United Nations for refugees, that was not the case for the growing number of migrants, many of whom were exposed to discrimination, exploitation and other forms of human rights violations. Those factors, coupled with the generally weak regime of global migration governance, with its patchwork of ad hoc national solutions, had made it necessary to negotiate a global compact for migration. The new agreement would build on the key principles and general guidance of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, adopted in 2016.

Migrants versus refugees: the need for clear definitions

The discussion highlighted the need for the global compact for migration to better define migrants, as there is currently no clear definition of this large group as a distinct category. While many standards apply to the treatment of migrants — such as international human rights laws, labour laws and laws against transnational organized crime — they do not cover all migration issues and are not consistently applied.

In contrast, refugees, on the topic of which a separate compact is also being drawn up in 2018, are more clearly defined and governed by the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees. The term "refugees" refers to people who are forced to flee their countries because of a well-founded fear of persecution on the basis of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group. As a result of this legal framework, refugees qualify for international protection, and within the United Nations system there are resources dedicated to helping refugees.

The global compact for migration should clearly define which migrants are to receive protection, what kind of protection and for how long. Speakers suggested defining migrants based on their reasons for migration, including economic need, climate change, environmental degradation, food insecurity, humanitarian need, war and conflict, failed States, family reunification, gang recruitment, and child or forced marriage. Internally displaced persons may also need to be included in the global compact for migration.

6. The global compact for migration should provide a strong framework for effective global cooperation on migration so that it becomes safe, orderly and regular, thereby ensuring that migration benefits all people and countries fairly. For example, dismantling human trafficking and smuggling networks associated with migration requires a joint response. Demographic and labour market trends, such as ageing and shrinking societies in some countries and growing populations in others, will continue to drive people across borders for work. Issues such as missing migrants and unaccompanied children also typically involve multiple countries and require collaboration.

7. While studies have shown that migration generally benefits the migrant and the host country, sending countries may face challenges such as brain drain. The global compact for migration will need to streamline practices connected to migration, such as remittances and recruitment. Remittances, which add up to nearly $450 billion a year, must be better regulated, less costly and more transparent. Ethical and transparent recruitment practices are needed to protect migrants' rights, prevent illegal activities and eliminate employee-paid fees.

8. In sum, participants stressed the need for the global compact for migration to address comprehensively all aspects of migration, including outflow and return to the home country. Participants also highlighted the need for a strong follow-up process and for more effective communication about migration issues, which can help with proper implementation.

Shared responsibility

9. While participants repeatedly advocated shared responsibility and burden-sharing with regard to hosting migrants and refugees, there was acknowledgement that the burden of hosting was disproportionately borne by certain countries, such as Greece, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey in the case of the Syrian crisis. Some parliamentarians expressed concern over the possibility that the global compact for migration would be non-binding; others said that, regardless of its legal force, the global compact would put pressure on more countries to contribute and would increase international cooperation on migration.

10. Some participants noted the tension between those countries whose migration policies were designed to cherry-pick the most highly skilled, relatively well-off migrants and those countries left with no choice but to admit low-skilled migrants or migrants who were harder to integrate because of cultural or other differences.

11. Participants noted that some countries fuelled migration by intervening in their neighbours' internal affairs, supporting civil wars, promoting harsh austerity and deregulation policies (neo-liberalism), or supporting terrorist and separatist groups. One representative voiced concern that citizens from his country might not enjoy the same benefits abroad as foreigners in his country and suggested that the same rules should be applicable to all parties in the global compact for migration.

Tackling root causes and challenges related to migration

12. One of the themes that emerged from the hearing was the need to concentrate on the root causes of migration, not just the phenomenon itself, which may be merely symptomatic of larger economic or political problems. Ultimately, migration should be a choice, not something that takes place out of necessity.

13. It was noted that in order to stop large outflows of people, it was necessary to invest in developing countries, prevent war and conflict through diplomacy, improve the economic conditions that drive people to leave, and work on combating climate change. Some concern was raised about judging a country's generosity towards migrants by how many migrants it takes in, as some countries focus on attacking the root causes of migration by investing in developing countries. Member States must also foster conditions that encourage their citizens abroad to return. This includes improving the economy and health and education systems and providing incentives for returnees.

14. Key messages from this discussion included:

(a) The global compact for migration needs to clearly define migration and migrants so as to avoid confusion with refugees;

(b) The global compact needs to provide practical guidance to respond to regular and irregular migration of all kinds, while at the same time addressing root causes, security concerns and the possibility of repatriation in a balanced manner;

(c) The global compact must uphold the principle of shared responsibility in all its dimensions, such as between countries of origin and destination and between the national and global levels;

(d) The global compact needs to make reference to and reaffirm all relevant human rights treaties and migration-related conventions, including the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

II. Migration policies for economic development, social cohesion and integration

> "Integration doesn't just happen automatically; it requires investment. And it requires investment not just by governments, but by employers, by schools, by community centres, by religious communities"
>
> Michele Klein Solomon
> International Organization
> for Migration

15. Countries may be places of origin, transit or destination for migrants, and most are a combination of some or all of these designations. Parliamentarians spoke about the importance of bilateral and multilateral agreements and global cooperation to ensure migrants' rights are protected during every stage of migration. Migrants must be treated with dignity and respect and in accordance with human rights laws, regardless of their migration status.

16. For a migration programme to be successful, social cohesion and integration of migrants must be prioritized. In the end, the difficulty of integration is one of the main obstacles to the admission of large flows of migrants. A holistic approach is necessary so that migrants can be well informed and can access services such as health, housing, education, language classes, cultural orientation and legal assistance. Integration cannot be done half-heartedly or with leftover funds; it requires time, resources and prioritization at all levels of government and civil society.

17. Subnational actors should be consulted, as they often carry out integration programmes locally and can give valuable feedback to national authorities. Since most migrants move into cities, mayors and municipal leaders must be included in migration-related discussions, policymaking and budgeting.

18. Examples of migration policies, best practices for integration and social cohesion, and recent legislation pertaining to migrants, the diaspora and returnees are presented below.

Incoming migrants

Community integration

19. In Canada, private sponsors, Rotary clubs and churches helped integrate recent Syrian refugees through a holistic approach that ensured that children attended school and parents had access to English or French classes and other services. This created

personal links and friendships that helped with cohesion and integration in their new communities.

Information and access to services

20. In Finland, new migrants can meet with someone who can address any concerns and discuss future plans; research shows that those who have done this earn twice the wages of those who have not. Côte d'Ivoire has centres where migrants can benefit from services such as free legal assistance. The Republic of Korea offers information to migrants in 16 languages through online resources and a mobile application, as well as a 24-hour support hotline for migrant women.

Political participation

21. Integrating migrants in Finland includes ensuring they can actively engage in society. Those who have been living in a Finnish town for at least two years can vote and participate in municipal elections. Participants from Finland and other countries also spoke about the importance of recognizing dual citizenship, which encourages connections to home. A representative from the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland said that the global compact for migration should help ensure that political parties are welcoming to migrants so they can engage in political life. Several participants mentioned the challenge of determining when migrants should be eligible for citizenship and voting rights and whether this should include requirements such as familiarity with the local language, culture and history.

Health

22. The National Assembly of the Republic of Korea has enacted two bills to improve the treatment of foreigners and codify rules pertaining to benefits such as health insurance. Foreign workers now have 90 per cent of inpatient and surgical bills covered through insurance. In Côte d'Ivoire and other countries, the health policy is the same for citizens and foreign nationals.

Education

23. Parliamentarians stressed the need to allow all children to attend school, regardless of their migration status or their parents' or guardians' migration status. In 2005, the Ministry of Education of Thailand called on schools to enrol children regardless of documentation; by 2015, nearly 76,000 children from Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Viet Nam had been enrolled in Thai schools. In Turkey, which houses more than 3 million Syrian refugees, more than 508,000 Syrian children attend school, but more teachers are needed. Morocco has given scholarships to about 20,000 foreign nationals.

Employment

24. Promoting regular migration is essential in order to allow migrants to work legally and prevent black markets. The global economy and shifting demographics mean that many countries rely on migrant labour, and migration policies should reflect these needs. One participant pointed out the problem of having a free flow of goods and services, but not people. Several spoke about the need to streamline people's credentials, so that skills and education gained in one country could be applicable elsewhere. The example of seafarers was given, as the International Labour Organization sets universally recognized standards in the sector.

Diaspora

Information and orientation

25. With more than 10 million Filipinos living outside their country, the Government has a comprehensive system that includes services such as pre-departure orientation, which informs future migrants about their rights, as well as the culture and laws of the country of destination. In the host countries, Filipinos can access services such as financial literacy seminars, which help them save their earnings while abroad and teach them how to invest upon returning.

Political participation

26. About 3 million of Senegal's 15 million citizens live abroad, and they account for a third of the country's gross domestic product. Since the 1990s, Senegalese living abroad have been able to participate in presidential and legislative elections. Thanks to a 2016 law, members of the diaspora can now also elect their representative in Parliament.

Protection of temporary migrant workers

27. Between 60,000 and 100,000 Kenyans leave each year for low-skilled and service-based jobs in the member States of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates). As many of these migrant workers were at risk of abuse, torture, slavery and even death, Kenya temporarily banned such work in 2012. This led the Government of Kenya to enter into bilateral agreements that outlined requirements such as minimum wage, mode of payment and worker registration. Kenya lifted the ban on temporary workers in December 2017. A national labour market system now keeps track of Kenyans working abroad. The Government of Kenya has also sent labour attachés to Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates; they help workers settle abroad and handle any reports of mistreatment. Training is also offered; it includes the provision of information on housing as well as cultural issues, such as requirements to wear a headscarf or a hijab in certain places.

Returning migrants

Assisting with returns

28. Representatives spoke about efforts to facilitate citizens' return home. For example, Mali has worked with the International Organization for Migration to encourage voluntary returns; this has led to the repatriation of more than 8,000 Malians since 2013. The Philippines provides a transportation allowance for those who want to return; the Department of Labour and Employment pays the fee for documented migrants, while the Department of Foreign Affairs handles the cost for undocumented migrants. The Government of the Philippines also covers immigration penalty fees for those overstaying their visas in order to help bring them home. Morocco has also repatriated thousands of citizens and paid for the costs when necessary.

Economic integration of returnees

29. Some countries give returnees financial assistance upon returning home, or incentives that make it easier to start a business. Through a pilot programme, El Salvador has given 5,000 returning citizens $1,500. Filipinos who return home can receive an allowance and benefit from a provision that allows them to start their own business. In order to address economic drivers of migration and create opportunities for vulnerable groups, Kenya revised its laws to reserve 33 per cent of government

procurement funds for enterprises owned by women, youth and people with disabilities.

Cities and migration

Most migrants move into cities and stay there. This can strain urban housing plans, the waste and energy sectors, and infrastructure. "Urban resilience" refers to the ability of cities and their systems to adapt, survive and thrive when faced with everything from terrorist attacks and earthquakes to a mass influx of migrants.

Migration can be an opportunity to build resilience when local leaders and mayors incorporate it into master plans. It has prompted mayors of several northern European cities to rethink public housing; some are experimenting with modular designs to accommodate not just migrants, but also the elderly, students and the formerly homeless. In Athens, officials are working with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to turn vacant buildings into housing for refugees and other vulnerable groups. Cities like Paris are experimenting with "tactical urbanism", where low-cost temporary building environments are used to foster social interaction between different groups.

In order for cities to thrive, they need funding, resources and the mandate to plan and respond effectively, whether that means the ability to raise taxes, issue debt, zone effectively, build quickly, or integrate migrants into the labour force. If Governments cannot provide support or access international funds, cities should be able to do that on their own.

Cities can also take the lead on integration. In New York, all residents, including undocumented migrants, can obtain government-issued identification that gives access to city buildings, can be used to interact with law enforcement and provides membership in cultural institutions. The programme is being replicated in other cities, including Athens. One speaker said that such programmes can help fight xenophobia because they do not single out migrants but apply to entire populations. Cities can also issue guides to inform newcomers about how to access resources and benefits. Special information desks can be set up in city libraries, social service organizations and hospitals, with "immigrant navigators", persons trained to offer individualized support and referrals to migrants.

30. Key messages from this discussion included:

(a) Ensure that migration laws and policies comply with international standards, are migrant-centred, respect human rights and are anchored in inclusivity and cooperation;

(b) Ensure that public discourse about migration and migrants is informed and based on facts and data;

(c) Strengthen coherence between national policies and local responses to migration, including by providing sufficient resources for community integration and employment creation;

(d) Ensure that public services are available to all residents, including migrants, regardless of status;

(e) Enter into partnerships with the private sector, business, media and civil society to share information about migrants and migration and to ensure that migrants are appropriately integrated into economic development and labour market policies;

(f) Use the convening power of parliament to bring together stakeholders, including migrants, trade unions and community groups, in order to have input into migration policies and more broadly promote economic and social integration;

(g) Introduce the voices of migrants into deliberations and encourage their political participation;

(h) Assess the effectiveness of national migration policies in the light of the global compact for migration and work with IPU and the United Nations system to review those policies and strengthen the institutional capacities for their implementation, including through the committee system.

III. Migration risks and vulnerable populations

> "Children are children wherever they are, and they need to be treated that way"
>
> James Campbell
> Save the Children

31. Migration can involve many risks, threats and dangerous routes. In just the first two months of 2018, 630 migrants died while trying to reach their destination. A speaker from Mali said that more than 500 Malians had died in the desert and the "open skies cemetery of the Mediterranean". Irregular migration can be dangerous and should be discouraged; international cooperation is needed to ensure that migration is safe, orderly and regular.

32. Some migrants are disproportionately at risk of exploitation, physical and sexual abuse, organ theft, smuggling and trafficking, forced labour, torture, slavery and death. Participants recommended that the global compact for migration pay particular attention to vulnerable groups, including women and children, unaccompanied minors, and people with disabilities. They expressed concern over the growing criminalization of migrants and stressed the need to protect each person's inalienable human rights. Countries should be prepared to accept the most vulnerable migrants and not just the wealthiest and most skilled ones.

Smuggling and human trafficking

33. Each year, millions of children, women and men become victims of human trafficking, and criminals earn an estimated $32 billion annually from human and sexual exploitation. Several countries have recently strengthened laws against trafficking and smuggling, and parliamentarians have encouraged the use of bilateral and multilateral agreements to dismantle the criminal networks behind those activities. Consular assistance and cooperation can also be helpful in this area, as can aggressive investigations and prosecutions. In order to hold perpetrators accountable, some countries offer free legal assistance to persons who want to prosecute their traffickers.

National security and terrorism

34. While studies have shown that foreign-born residents are less likely to commit crimes than native-born residents, participants acknowledged that migrants and refugees are disproportionately seen as threats. Parliamentarians were encouraged to use facts and data to fight these misconceptions and to emphasize the importance of cohesion and integration as part of these efforts. Safe, orderly and regular migration can also help protect international security.

Children and unaccompanied minors

35. More than 50 million migrant children have been forcibly displaced for reasons such as violence, abuse and exploitation. Participants recommended that the global compact for migration recognize children as a vulnerable group and protect those who are unaccompanied or separated. For example, in New York, following a surge in unaccompanied minors, city officials placed representatives from health and education departments at the courthouses, so they could meet with children as they came for their appointments. Speakers underlined the need for all children to access services such as legal assistance, health and education, so that the world would not end up with another lost generation.

36. Unregistered children are at particular risk of joining the estimated 3 million stateless children, so it is imperative that States register and provide identity for every child at birth. Decisions about child migrants need to safeguard their best interests, including by ending the practice of child detention and by reaffirming the principle of non-refoulement of children who might be at risk of persecution at home. Member States were invited to follow the lead of countries such as Costa Rica, Ecuador and Panama, which have ended child immigration detention.

Girls and women

37. In many sessions, speakers pointed out that girls and women are among the most vulnerable migrants, and welcomed the gender-sensitive approach of the global compact for migration. Migrant girls and women are likely to have unwanted pregnancy and suffer from physical and sexual abuse. They must have access to full sexual and reproductive health services, regardless of their status or stage of migration.

People with disabilities

38. Research shows that more than 30 per cent of migrants have disabilities. They are typically the most traumatized, and girls and women with disabilities are the most abused. And people who examine them at vetting points are often not trained to work with people with disabilities. Without services such as sign language interpretation, these migrants face even greater challenges in home, transit and destination countries.

Regularization of migrants

Most of today's 258 million migrants, who represent 3.4 per cent of the world's population, have moved through legal channels. While preventing irregular migration is a key goal, some policies aiming to stop involuntary migration needlessly exacerbate human suffering.

Undocumented migrants may not be able to access employment opportunities or various services and benefits. Regularizing them can boost economic growth and increase tax revenues and social security contributions. The discussion highlighted two main approaches to regularization:

(a) Programmes that offer one-time measures that respond to a particular situation and open a window for a specific group of people to become documented. Greece, Italy, Portugal and Spain have recently used such measures;

(b) Mechanisms that are a part of broader migration policy. These are typically extended to long-standing residents who can show proof of employment or demonstrate humanitarian or other needs. Belgium, France and Germany are among the countries that have recently used such mechanisms.

Some participants expressed concern that regularization of undocumented migrants may undermine existing laws while also attracting more irregular migrants. In response, parliamentarians were encouraged to think not in terms of undercutting laws, but in terms of improving existing ones, so that they are updated to reflect current needs. The question is usually not whether to regularize, but how to design and implement migration policies that create regular pathways to migration.

Thailand has signed memorandums of understanding with neighbouring countries that have led to the documentation of more than 1 million workers over the past two years. The Plurinational State of Bolivia has created standards that have helped regularize more than 80,000 migrants. Morocco recently mobilized 3,000 officials to help with requests for regularization.

39. Key messages from this discussion included:

(a) The best solution to irregular migration (which renders migrants more vulnerable) is to create more regular pathways to migration, such as work visas, portable social security benefits and a host of other measures that allow people to migrate or return to their home countries as needed;

(b) Vulnerable groups such as women, children and people with disabilities should be given special protection, in migration policies and in the law, against exploitation and abuse;

(c) Birth registration of all children, including migrants, needs to be enforced to ensure that their rights are protected;

(d) Detention of irregular migrants, particularly children, should be avoided as it is counterproductive and runs against human rights norms;

(e) The elimination of human trafficking requires stronger bilateral and multilateral cooperation, as well as stronger enforcement of existing laws;

(f) National security policies should not single out migrants, since migrants are actually less likely to pose a threat to society than native-born citizens.

IV. Combating racism and xenophobia

"Global economic and social interconnection and interdependence mean that anti-migrant racism and xenophobia are toxic forces that amplify the sort of polarization that is proving to be a civic and political cancer all over the world"

E. Tendayi Achiume
Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance

40. The challenge of combating racism and xenophobia emerged as a common thread, with speakers frequently voicing concerns about the rise of hate speech, racism, xenophobia and nationalist movements, as well as lies and misinformation about migration, and the scapegoating of migrants. Speakers stressed the need to rely on data and facts to combat this narrative. While migration may lead to short-term

displacement of native workers, it is important to note that most migration, when properly managed, leads to better outcomes for migrants and citizens alike.

41. As opinion leaders and role models, parliamentarians have a special responsibility to avoid inflammatory language about migrants and to set a tone in public discourse about migrants that avoids stereotypes. Other steps that parliamentarians can take to help tackle racism and xenophobia include:

(a) Systematically call out and condemn xenophobia, racism and hate speech, including discourse cloaked in the language of national security and economic and national identity concerns;

(b) Condemn hate speech and consider whether a new legal framework to combat racism and xenophobia is needed;

(c) Regularly talk to constituents to help change the negative, false or misleading narrative about migration and migrants;

(d) Focus on social cohesion and integration of migrants, which can help tackle stereotypes and negative information;

(e) Set a leadership example by embracing openness, respect for human dignity and appreciation of diversity;

(f) Go beyond policy debates by making field visits, meeting with migrants and refugees in their communities and forging relationships with parliamentarians in neighbouring countries;

(g) Engage mayors, municipal leaders and groups and organizations that may help with integration efforts, including schools, churches and community organizations;

(h) Help establish local hate crime units, managed by municipal governments, that are trained to detect hate crimes against migrants;

(i) Ensure that existing international human rights obligations regarding equality and non-discrimination are upheld.

Parliamentary dialogue and follow-up

As discussed throughout this report, parliamentarians can play a vital role in helping implement the global compact for migration.

When devising and overseeing national migration policies, parliamentarians should consider the impact they could have regionally and globally, mediating immediate concerns with the long-term vision and commitments of the global compact for migration.

At the national level, parliamentarians can create platforms for dialogue on migration, such as the National Parliamentary Caucus on Migration and Development in Bangladesh or the House of Commons All-Party Parliamentary Group on Migration in the United Kingdom. Parliamentarians can also meet at the regional level, where migration flows often have more impact, to develop solutions across borders.

Regular dialogue on migration must be scheduled at the national, regional and global levels. The Inter-Parliamentary Union, together with partners such as the United Nations Development Programme, can help ensure that such meetings are part of the follow-up process of the global compact for migration and that parliaments have committees and secretariats that can effectively implement migration policies. In addition to relying on committees, legislators can band together to force institutional changes that hold Governments accountable for their migration policies.

V. Conclusion

"The only way to change the world is if we start within our communities"

Gabriela Cuevas Barron
President of the
Inter-Parliamentary Union

42. The hearing provided further evidence that a global compact for migration is needed to put to rest a number of misconceptions about migration while creating a practical framework to manage migration more effectively at the national, regional and global levels. There was strong support for the idea that the global compact needs to be migrant-centred and rights-based, upholding the rights of migrants everywhere regardless of their status. At each stage of the migration progress, from departure to settlement and eventual return, policies and practices must respect the dignity of migrants and provide access to essential services, such as health, housing, education and legal services, as well as opportunities for employment and integration. The global compact for migration should enhance global cooperation and be in align with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to help realize the benefits of migration for all.

43. Parliaments will have a key role to play in the implementation of the global compact for migration once it has been adopted. To this end, they need to be prepared to hold Governments accountable for their commitments. Many parliaments will need stronger institutional capacities to help design effective migration policies and oversee their implementation and budgeting.

44. Most importantly, the hearing underscored the human element of this debate, urging decision makers and opinion makers alike to speak of migrants in more positive tones: not as mere numbers, but as human beings; not as objects, but as actors; not as welfare recipients, but as purveyors of economic, social and cultural opportunity to enrich societies at any stage of development.

Annex

List of speakers

Moderator: Nermeen Shaikh

Day one

Opening session

President of the General Assembly at its seventy-second session, Miroslav Lajčák

President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, Gabriela Cuevas Barron

Migration today: main facts, agreed principles and gaps

Special Representative of the Secretary-General for International Migration, Louise Arbour

Director, Global Compact for Migration, International Organization for Migration, Michele Klein Solomon

Distinguished Fellow, Overseas Development Institute, former Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations and co-facilitator for the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, David Donoghue

National policies and local responses: best practices and the need for coordination

Member of Parliament, El Salvador, Foreign Relations Committee, Central American Integration and Expatriate Salvadorans, Karina Sosa

Director of Migration Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Morocco, Co-Chair of the Global Forum on Migration and Development, Ahmed Skim

Undersecretary for Migrant Workers Affairs, Department of Foreign Affairs, Philippines, Sarah Arriola

Representative of the Rockefeller 100 Resilient Cities initiative, Vittoria Zanuso

Addressing large movements: domestic initiatives and international cooperation

Member of Parliament, President of the National Assembly of Mali, Issaka Sidibé

Member of Parliament, Chair of the Migration Commission, Lithuania, Guoda Burokiene

Permanent Representative of Antigua and Barbuda to the United Nations, Walton Alfonso Webson

Professor at the University of California (Davis), Phillip Martin

Representative to the United Nations, Médecins sans frontières, Fabien Dubuet

Social cohesion and integration of migrants

Member of Parliament, Algeria, Seddik Chiheb

Deputy Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations, Louise Blais

Special Rapporteur of the Human Rights Council on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, E. Tendayi Achiume

Acting Commissioner, Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs, City of New York, Bitta Mostofi

Day two

Realizing the human rights of all migrants: a whole-of-government approach

Member of Parliament, Sweden, Anti Avsan

Member of Parliament, Chile, Denise Pascal

Professor of International Law, Academic Council on the United Nations System, Jill Goldenziel

United Nations Programme Officer, Save the Children, James Campbell

Irregular and regular status: common principles and best practices

Member of Parliament, Kenya, Eve Akinyi Obara

Senator, Italy, Francesco Maria Amoruso

Special Representative to the United Nations, International Labour Organization, Vinicius Carvalho Pinheiro

Political and social participation of migrants in decision-making

Member of Parliament, Speaker, Finland, Maria Lohela

Consul General, Senegal, Elhadji Amadou Ndao

Representative of International IDEA, Massimo Tommasoli

Global compact for migration and follow-up: the role of parliamentarians

Member of Parliament, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Migration, Kate Green

Member of Parliament, Bangladesh, Chair of the Parliamentary Caucus on Migration and Development, Israfil Alam

Representative of the United Nations Development Programme, Charles Chauvel

Closing session

President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, Gabriela Cuevas Barron